



A Mvskoke Media production - The official tribal newspaper of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation

MUSCOGEE NATION NEWS

County sheriff suspends agreement with Lighthorse

Okmulgee County halts MOU, MCN aims for cooperation

Gary Fife/Radio Specialist

OKMULGEE, Okla. — As of Sept. 22, 2015, Muscogee (Creek) Nation Lighthorse Tribal Police Department officers cannot legally take law enforcement actions when they venture off MCN sovereign tribal property

into the Okmulgee County jurisdiction.

Okmulgee County Sheriff Eddy Rice has suspended the memorandum that establishes a cross-jurisdictional relationship between LTPD and his office.

Rice said his department was

not being kept informed of Lighthorse activity on county lands and roads, which created a liability issue.

"The State of Oklahoma, we've had training as far as liability. The liability falls on Okmulgee County and the Sheriff's Department and me personally, as well," he said. "Anything that an officer does comes back on the

department, on the county and me as the departmental head."

He would not give specific examples but said problems had occurred more than once when the county sheriff was not notified.

Rice said his office has asked that they be made aware of any

Agreement - 3

MCN adopts free press legislation for Mvskoke Media

Muscogee (Creek) Nation introduces protections for tribal media

NAJA/Media Release

The Muscogee (Creek) Nation (MCN) added free press protections for the tribe's media division, Mvskoke Media, with the passage of a free press act.

The MCN National Council passed NCA 15-218 by a unanimous vote of 14-0 during the Sept. 26, 2015 meeting at the tribal headquarters in Okmulgee, Okla. MCN Principal Chief George Tiger signed the legislation into law Oct. 8, 2015.

The council cited access to information and a need for an independent media with stronger objective reporting by the tribe's media department as findings of support for the amendment.

Reps. Thomas Yahola, Pete Beaver, Johnnie Greene, David Nichols, Dode Barnett, Joyce Deere, Frank Coachman, Mark Randolph, Lucian Tiger, David Hill, Robert Hufft, James Jennings and Adam Jones co-sponsored the legislation.

The department includes a semi-monthly newspaper, weekly radio and television broadcasts and graphic design and printing services.

Mvskoke Media was previously organized under the tribe's executive branch.

Sterling Cospier, editor of the tribe's official newspaper, the 'Muscogee Nation News' (MNN), said the passage of the act is a positive first step toward an independent press.

"Officially confirming the fourth estate to the framework of our government is an imperative exercise in tribal sovereignty and self-governance," he said. "We intend to perpetuate this exercise by immediately utilizing the protective provisions of this bill to fulfill its purpose of bringing fair and balanced accounts of MCN affairs to the citizens."

Jason Salsman was named interim manager of the department earlier this year.

He is also the multimedia producer and host of 'Native News Today,' the only all-Native news format currently airing on network television in the state of Oklahoma.

"The citizens will get timely, pertinent news from credible journalists with excellent sources and documentation to back their work," Salsman said. "The fact that the fourth largest tribe in America will

Protest hosted at MCN for Dollar General case



Amanda Rutland/MNN

The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Family Violence Prevention Program held a protest rally Dec. 7, 2015 at the Mound Building on the MCN Tribal Complex in Okmulgee, Okla., against the efforts of Dollar General in the Dollar General Corporation v. Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians U.S. Supreme Court Case.

Emvpanayv — One who tells the story

Auctioned artifacts, Star Wars, OK tribal economic impact, Trudell

Gary Fife/Radio Specialist

OKMULGEE, Okla. — Hope you had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

At the beginning of December 2015, the U.S. Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell met with French Minister of Justice Christiane Taubira about the selling of tribal sacred objects in auctions in France. Jewell asked for their help to repatriate those objects to their tribes of origin in the United States. France is one of the European nations that still allow such sales to continue. No word on how those talks went.

Now, if we could just get France to reverse the Louisiana Purchase (or admit it wasn't theirs to sell anyway.)

Something I noticed over the last couple of months — the Choctaws are getting some interesting media attention. First it was President Barack Obama going to see the tribe in July of this past year and I quote:

Emvpanayv - 4

Nation stands in solidarity with Mississippi Choctaw

Amanda Rutland/Media Specialist

OKMULGEE, Okla. — The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Family Violence Prevention Program held a demonstration rally Dec. 7, 2015 to protest Dollar General's petition that tribal courts have no jurisdiction over non-Natives in civil cases.

According to the U. S. Supreme Court blog, www.scotusblog.com, the Supreme Court heard arguments Dec. 7, 2015 in the case of Dollar General Corporation v. Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians.

The Native Alliance Against Violence put out a fact sheet titled '5 Facts: The Dollar General Case.' The fact sheet explained that a minor was allegedly sexually assaulted by a store manager while employed at a Dollar General store, which is

located on the tribe's reservation through a lease agreement to operate on the tribal land.

FVPP also held a quilt-making workshop Dec. 2, 2015 for survivors and advocates. The quilt squares were part of Quilt Walk for Justice held concurrently in Washington, D.C.

Several MCN tribal officials and representatives attended the quilt walk to stand in solidarity with the Mississippi Choctaw.

FVPP Director Shawn Partridge said the program wanted to show support locally.

"I hope there is a great showing [at the quilt walk]; I know from our tribe out in D.C. Obviously, not all of us can be in D.C.," Partridge said. "Regardless, we wanted to be able to participate in some way."

Partridge said at the Okmulgee rally, that because of criminal

jurisdiction, the federal government would have had to prosecute the case but declined to file charges.

"That family, in order to seek justice for that child filed a civil law suit against Dollar General Corporation, which is not uncommon and happens a lot of times in these kinds of cases," Partridge said.

An NAAV fact sheet stated that the victim's family sued Dollar General for compensation for medical and trauma expenses. Dollar General has challenged the tribe's jurisdiction on the case.

In a Stanford Law School article about the case published Dec. 3, 2015 Stanford Assistant Professor of Law Gregory Ablavsky explained that the case was heard in the U. S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, which ruled that the Choctaw

Protest - 4

MCN District Court denies protective order on subpoenas

Committee to decide future proceedings

Jessica McBride/Media Coordinator

OKMULGEE, Okla. — In a Nov. 30, 2015 order issued by Muscogee (Creek) Nation District Court Judge Greg Bigler, he denied the petition for a protective order filed by MCN Ex-

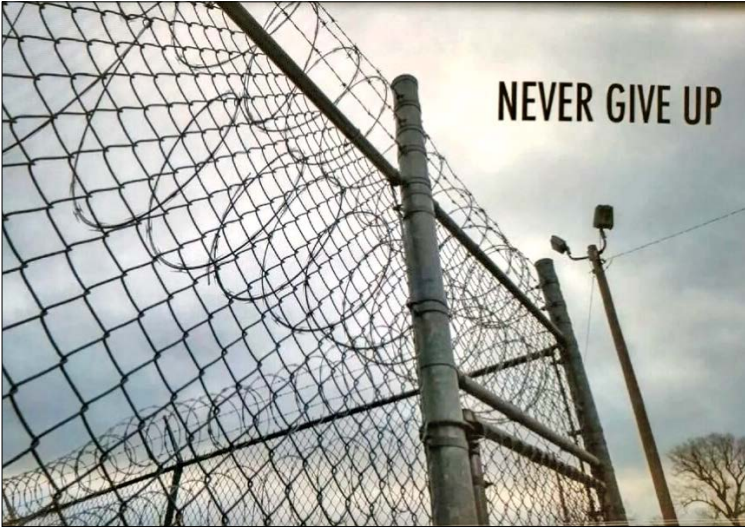
ecutive Branch legal counsel Joe Williams on subpoenas issued by the MCN National Council Fact Finding Committee. The subpoenas were issued to several individuals to obtain further information in response to findings from the forensic audit of MCN.

The petition was aimed at 11 subpoenas for employees of the

Housing Department, Treasury Department, Fleet Management, Information Technology Department, Public Relations Department, Family Violence Prevention Program, Human Resources Department, Office of the Principal Chief as well as a

Subpoenas - 3

Free - 8



Film screenshot
The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Reintegration Program previewed a short version of their documentary titled, 'Never Give Up' Nov. 19, 2015 at the Mvskoke Dome in Okmulgee, Okla.

Reintegration Program releases short documentary

Film documents the journeys of clients

Chelsie Rich/Project Specialist

OKMULGEE, Okla. — The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Reintegration Program previewed a short version of their documentary titled 'Never Give Up' Nov. 19, 2015 at the Mvskoke Dome in Okmulgee. The film is focused on individuals who have been through the program and how their lives have benefited and changed.

“What this details is a little bit about our program and what we do; kind of our philosophy,” RiP Manager Tony

fish said. “It gives real life testimony from some of our actual clients that’s been through the program and how the program has helped them.”

One of the clients in the film tells of how he was sentenced to 70 years but was able to get out early and find a job because of the program.

“A lot of people are scared to get into a program like this... something like this would help them out,” RiP client Elisha Watashe said in the film.

In the film, Watashe tells a story of how he told his young daughter to never give up and in turn, she encouraged her friend to do the same.

“Our beliefs here at the program are, we believe everyone is important, even an ex-prisoner,” Fish said. “We believe people are capable of change and we believe through our ef-

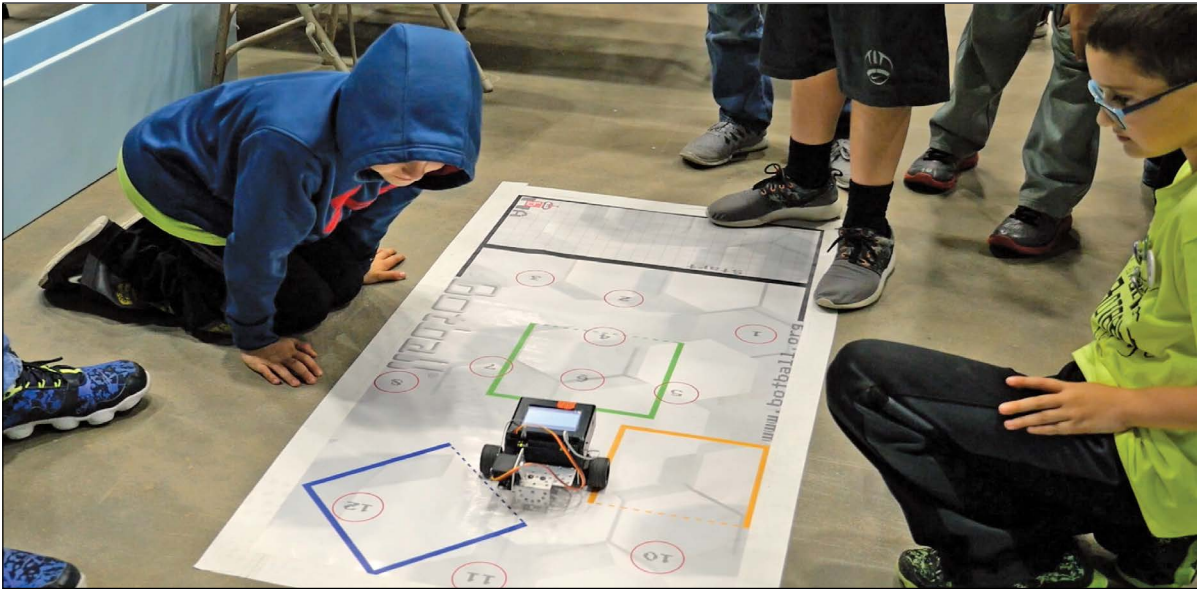
orts that we can restore them back into the atmosphere of healing and forgiveness; that we can reclaim our people and set them on the right track.”

The mission of RiP is to protect the public by offering quality re-entry services to Muscogee (Creek) citizens and re-invest positive citizens back into the community.

The program provides services to eligible citizens that have been incarcerated to help them transition back into society.

Fish said RiP was established in 2005 and MCN is the first tribe in the United States to have a reintegration program. The RiP staff has grown from four employees to 14 and has

2nd Muscogee (Creek) Nation Junior Botball Challenge held



Native News Today
The Muscogee (Creek) Nation in collaboration with the KISS Institute for Practical Robotics hosted the 2nd MCN Junior Botball Challenge Nov. 12, 2015 at the Tulsa Expo Square Pavilion in Tulsa, Okla.

Nation supports program designed to improve students’ futures

Chelsie Rich/Project Specialist

OKMULGEE, Okla. — The Muscogee (Creek) Nation in collaboration with the KISS Institute for Practical Robotics hosted the 2nd MCN Junior Botball Challenge Nov. 12, 2015 at the Tulsa Expo Square Pavilion in Tulsa.

There were 147 teams made up of students ranging from first-eighth grades that competed in 10 challenges.

“One of the reasons we chose the Junior Botball Challenge is because it’s an ongoing curriculum,” MCN National Council Rep. Dode Barnett said. “The challenge is the students challenging themselves. It challenges the children to learn the coding and they’re really competing with themselves. They’re not competing with anybody else.”

Out of the 67 public school districts that are in the MCN jurisdiction, 44 schools were represented the day of the challenge.

According to the Botball website, the programs will focus on implementing the Junior Botball Challenge by providing professional development for educators that is motivating to their students as they apply content skills in a meaningful hands-on way and encourages them to think about and consider STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) degrees and careers.

Barnett was introduced to Botball while attending a conference in the summer of 2014 and brought the idea back to MCN. The Council passed NCA 14-203 during the Dec. 20, 2014 Council regular session, appropriating \$94,353 to implement

the program to be administered by the MCN Department of Education and Training.

To be eligible for a grant from MCN to implement the program, the school district must be within the tribal jurisdiction and have third-seventh grade students make up a team of four to 12, consisting of at least 50 percent Muscogee (Creek) students with a minimum of 50 percent female participation.

“One of the things that I am so excited to be a part of is an initiative that would require the participation of young girls, our young women because girls are being left behind in these STEM initiatives,” acting Secretary for the MCN Department of Education and Training Dwanna Robertson said.

All schools are encouraged to apply for the grant, even if the criteria is not met because they are considered on a case-by-case basis.

“We’re building a unique relationship with the school districts because they know we’re investing in the school district itself, in the teachers that work with our children every single day, especially in our rural districts,” Barnett said.

MCN is the first tribe to part-

ner with the KISS Institute to give Muscogee (Creek) youth the opportunity to gain STEM knowledge.

“Creek Nation National Council and the chief had the foresight to see what the program is and they’re looking down the road and seeing what the future jobs are for the Creek students. That’s why they’re supporting it,” KISS Institute Executive Director Steve Goodgame said.

The next MCN Junior Botball Challenge event is scheduled for April 30 at the Tulsa Expo Square Pavilion.

“Muscogee (Creek) Nation is more supportive than most organizations in supporting their students,” Goodgame said. “They’re proactive in supporting the Creek students and trying to improve their education.”

The event is free and open to the public and is open to all registered Junior Botball Challenge teams.

For more information about the MCN Junior Botball Program, visit: www.facebook.com/mcnjuniorbotball. For more information about the KISS Institute for Practical Robotics, visit www.kipr.org or www.juniorbotballchallenge.org.

According to the Botball website, the programs will focus on implementing the Junior Botball Challenge by providing professional development for educators that is motivating to their students as they apply content skills in a meaningful hands-on way and encourages them to think about and consider STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) degrees and careers.

MUSCOGEE NATION NEWS

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Amanda Rutland/MNN

Muscogee (Creek) Nation Bar Association President Geri Wisner presented Angel Tree Project Coordinator Beky Baker with a \$1,000 check to aid the program Nov. 5, 2015 at the Children and Family Services Building on the MCN Tribal Complex in Okmulgee, Okla.

MCN Bar Association looks for ways to help community

President hopes to set legal legacy

Amanda Rutland/Media Specialist

TULSA, Okla. — The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Bar Association summarized mission statement is to support the MCN Judicial System, sponsor and engage training opportunities for MCN Bar members and lawyers in Indian Country and advocate for Native American social, political, cultural and legal issues. Newly elected MCNBA President Geri Wisner wants to find ways to assist MCN and its citizens.

The bar association donated \$1,000 to the MCN Angel Tree program Nov. 5, 2015 and is considering providing scholarships in the future. “We’re looking at scholarships either for Indian law students or a Creek law student or students, if we can find them, to either help with books or assist some toward the bar prep,” Wisner said. Wisner feels that as Muscogee (Creek) people, there is a responsibility to assist others. “I didn’t get here by myself and you know, I stood several times

at the community center waiting for that commodity truck,” Wisner said. “There is that responsibility to give back, whether it’s you know in your community or even in the profession.” Wisner drew a connection between pre-Removal battles and modern law. “Traditionally speaking in the whole sense of fighting, you know for the Muscogees. It was Horseshoe Bend, Macon, Georgia, Alabama/Georgia where our

“I like to think we get our best Muscogee attorneys together and we best represent ourselves knowing who we are and where we come from.”

— MCN Bar Association President Geri Wisner

homelands were,” Wisner said. “Looking at where we are right now, when people want to either fight or they want to either protect their rights... it goes to the court room.” Wisner likened the social and legal progress of tribes to a football game with the ancestors advancing five yards at a time on the field. “Every five yards there was the ancestors or the people on the trail, people who stuck it through you know, being called names and all the things,” Wisner said. Wisner said she hopes to con-

tribute five yards and that there will be someone she can pass the ball to afterwards. She also said she would like to see more Muscogee (Creek) attorneys. “I would like to see a lot more Indians, a lot more Muscogees who are practicing law,” Wisner said. “I like to think we get our best Muscogee attorneys together and we best represent ourselves knowing who we are and where we come from.” MCNBA has approximately 300 members, but Wisner is hoping membership will increase. “Any way that we can help, that’s what we are looking to do, but it’s a whole lot easier if we have more like minded and, you know because there are only so many hours in the day and this kind of work doesn’t tend to lend itself easily into a 40 hour week,” Wisner said. Wisner said the Bar Association is open to both Natives and non-Natives. In order to be eligible to join MCNBA, one must have passed the bar exam and currently be in good standing with a bar. For more information about the MCN Bar Association, visit: www.creeksupremecourt.com/index.php/bar-assoc.

tailed as to the subject matter of the hearings,’ the decision states. Other matters raised by the petition concern delivery of the subpoenas in accordance with the timelines set for them by to the MCN Code Annotated, and addressing individuals in their official capacities at MCN or as individuals. The decision relays that the subpoenas will need to be reissued since the date on the documents has lapsed, and so new subpoenas will be able to address those matters. Council Fact Finding Committee Chairperson Dode Barnett said that the committee had not decided whether or not to reissue the subpoenas. “... As a whole, the committee just has not decided when we will proceed, but have verbalized that they want to proceed and continue to have the conversations surrounding the subpoenas,” Barnett said. Barnett said that the committee will need to consider the notice required by the MCN Code to issue the subpoenas prior to the testimony date, and how that corresponds with the upcoming holidays. When the new Council session begins in January, all of the committees have the potential to change members and leadership roles. Barnett said that the committee may decide to reissue the subpoenas at that time.

AGREEMENT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

such police activity so that they have a record of it. “One of the big issues that we have is that our office is required by state and federal law that we have to report all crime statistics into a certain database,” Rice said. “If we don’t get those, we can’t enter them; therefore we’re in dereliction of duty because we’re not entering those calls.” Lighthorse is the law enforcement agency for MCN, patrolling and safeguarding trust and restricted land. Any law enforcement activity off of trust or restricted land must be performed under an MOU agreement with the county. His department, Rice said, was trying to perform its obligations to everyone who lived within Okmulgee County, whether they were Muscogee (Creek) citizens or not. “If they (Lighthorse) pulled somebody over, if they left the parking lot of, we’ll say the casino and pulled onto a county road or onto a highway, then it falls into a state jurisdiction,” Rice said. Rice said he sent a letter to the Okmulgee County Commissioner’s Office, Okmulgee County District Attorney Rob Barris, LTPD Chief of Police Richard Fixico and the MCN Attorney General’s Office stating that he was suspending the MOU. Such legal agreements have allowed these law enforcement agencies to share resources and personnel when needed. Rice explained that his office has taken measures to address liability concerns internally and the MOU with LTPD was suspended to do the same. “We’ve had to change some of the stuff we do as the sheriff’s department to lighten that liability and we need to do the same thing with Lighthorse. Anything that they do off of sovereign land, if they turn the lights on, that falls underneath Okmulgee County solely,” Rice said. “We’re going to have to do some training or something like that so they understand the liability as well.” Other sheriff’s departments in and around the tribal jurisdiction do not have similar agreements in place. The Muskogee County Sheriff’s Office reported that expectations for such an agreement had been in the works in 2013 and 2014 but no final document was forthcoming from Lighthorse. The office reported that they would be receptive to such an agreement in the future. The Hughes County Sheriff’s Office stated they do not have such an agreement in place either. A representative from that office said that Lighthorse wanted an agreement to give authority to all its officers when in Hughes County jurisdiction, but that was something that the sheriff there would not agree to. Okfuskee County is another jurisdiction that does not have an agreement, according to its Sheriff’s Office. The Wagoner County Sheriff’s Office said the only agreement they could find on file was concerning the MCN Family Violence Prevention Program, dating some years back. Fixico said that they worked cooperatively with the law

enforcement agencies in those counties with signed MOUs, and that those agreements were to protect public safety. In situations such as preventing crimes from taking place in their presence or traffic accidents where life was endangered, Fixico said, they would take action to assist but leave the actual legal arrest and prosecution to the appropriate law enforcement agencies and that included Okmulgee County. For example, he explained, in a situation where two non-Indians might be fighting in a tribal casino parking lot, Lighthorse would act to stop the fight, but call in the law enforcement department with jurisdiction in that area to follow through. He said Lighthorse had some cooperative agreements such as one with the Tulsa Police Department but some agencies were not interested in a formal cross-jurisdictional agreement. “We would like to, but some agencies are not interested,” Fixico said. As for the Okmulgee Sheriff’s Office, Fixico said that they did act on some situations regarding crimes and emergencies. When appropriate, he said Lighthorse called the Okmulgee Sheriff’s Office to have them conduct arrests. He added that they worked on public safety issues but notified the appropriate counties. When asked if Lighthorse would pursue an MOU between his department and other law enforcement in and around MCN Fixico said, “We as a law enforcement agency want to work with all the state agencies we can.” He said he would like to speak with the Okmulgee County Sheriff’s Office about such an arrangement, but would wait until the new principal chief had taken office. During an interview with ‘Native News Today’ at the beginning of December 2015, Principal Chief Elect James Floyd said he would work to re-establish the agreement. “Already, I’ve met with the sheriff of Okmulgee County. He and I have had a couple of discussions about,” Floyd said. “Fortunately, I’ve worked for the tribe when we began to put those memorandums in place back in the ’80s so I know the value of them.” He discussed the challenges of and need for cooperation with shared jurisdiction. “I know that...what they bring both to the tribe and to the county in law enforcement because of the complexities of the different overlapping jurisdictions and the need for resources in times of criminal activity and things like that,” Floyd said. “You need all the resources that you can gather. So, we need the county just as much as the county needs the tribe.” Floyd outlined how he would address the issue with LTPD. “We explain to our Lighthorse administration what our role is. Probably the sheriff will come out and be with me,” he said. “We’ll jointly talk to our staff about that and what we need to do and how we need to act under the memorandum and how they will act as well.” Floyd voiced intention to get on a similar level with other agencies within the MCN jurisdiction.

Program stresses need for Native American foster parents



MNN File Photo

Muscogee (Creek) citizens needed for temporary placement

Darren DeLaune/MNN Reporter

OKMULGEE, Okla. — The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Children and Family Services Administration wants help with locating homes for Muscogee (Creek) foster children through their Resource Home and Recruitment Training program.

“We are looking for caring families who want to help our children and provide a place for them to stay,” MCN RHRT Manager Holly Dunn said.

The program has five foster homes and they are full.

“The homes now cannot take anymore children,” Manager

for the MCN Foster Care and Adoption Certification Placement Program Robyn Wind said. “They are at their maximum capacity.”

Dunn said they are starting recruitment to get more families for the children.

“We will be going to all the community centers very soon to talk to people who we hope will be interested,” Dunn said. “We want to get the word out that we need foster parents.”

The program understands that there are some stigmas associated with foster parenting such as fear of the unknown.

“Some of the families feel that they do not know what they are getting into when they take our children into their homes,” Dunn said. “I think that is what they are afraid of.”

Dunn wants the people to know they will have support and the program will be there every step of the way.

“We are not going to leave them alone,” Dunn said. “We are going to be with them and do everything possible to help them.”

Wind understands that some families do get attached to the children and it is hard to give them up when the time comes.

“We can understand that,” Wind said. “We know that is rough for the family but our main goal for a foster family is to provide a home for the child if they are not able to be in their own home with their biological family, for whatever reason.”

Wind said the families do not have to be a couple.

There can be single parent foster families also.

“If you feel that you want to be a foster parent, please let us know,” Wind said. “You do not have to be married.”

She also said there are different types of foster homes.

“We have a desperate need for families who will take a child for overnight or a weekend,” Wind said.

Dunn said potential candidates will go through a background check and home assessment to make sure that their house is suitable for children.

“They will need to get ahold of us and fill out an application and we will have them go through a background check, home assessment and a home visit,” Dunn said.

For more information, call CFSA at: 918-732-7869.

“If you are interested and want to know more about being a foster parent, please give us a call,” Dunn said. “We will answer any questions about foster parenting.”

EMVPANAYV

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

THE PRESIDENT: Hello, Oklahoma! (Applause.) Halito! (Hello in Choctaw.)

AUDIENCE: Halito!

PRESIDENT: Everybody, please have a seat. Have a seat. It's good to see you. How is everybody doing? (Applause.) First of all, Michelle says hi. (Laughter.) And I want to thank all of you for helping to build the terrific partnership that we share with the Choctaw Nation.

Lately, it was the standout quarterback of the Oklahoma Sooners, Baker Mayfield, on a TV show greeting the audience with ‘Halito.’ He’s taking a Choctaw language class at OU.

Were you in line to see the new ‘Star Wars’ movie? I love those flicks, but I wasn’t fanatic enough to spend days waiting for a movie. Camping out on hard sidewalks in front of a movie theater just isn’t my (or my kidneys’) style. In fact, I just stepped down from my ‘Star Wars’ costume days and sold four uniforms. I do still have some memories and collectibles, but nothing like what some of the Navajos got.

Pendleton Woolen Mills announced back in September that five blankets were commissioned featuring ‘Star Wars’ characters. (Now, how did I miss that one?)

According to the ‘Navajo Times,’ those Pendletons were brought to and sold at a trading post in Dine’ land. The paper said the blankets were incredibly popular and sold out in about a day. Boy, you really have to want one, though. The price tag is about \$250. How ‘bout that, ‘Star Wars’ and Pendletons, what a combination!

Why Navajo? Just a reminder — there is a Dine’ (Navajo) language version of ‘Star Wars: A New Hope’ on DVD.

Here’s an interesting idea.

According to the ‘Yamhill Valley News-Register,’ the tribal flag of the Grande Ronde reservation was hung in the Willamina, Ore., community’s high school gym.

It wasn’t an easy thing to do, but the tribal flag joins the national and state flags in addition to a POW/MIA flag. One local official cited the University of Oregon, where the nine flags from the state’s federally recognized tribes are displayed around the Erb Memorial Union Amphitheater.

An interesting thought, huh, perhaps worth looking into locally? Think Okmulgee would go for it? Just wondering.

Here we go again, locally, on a well-worn subject.

It looked like the planned American Indian Cultural Center and Museum in Oklahoma City was clearing the last of its hurdles for completion — but it’s not to be. The state legislature said they had given all the bucks they were going to and turned the project over to Oklahoma City to be finished.

Well, it seems that OKC is not happy about the rising costs of finishing and then operating the project. Nothing seems to be working for the museum.

On the site, there are problems with interference with underground utility lines. It sits in the middle of the site, limiting room for other development that is supposed to provide additional financial support.

It would be nice to see the thing finished, but aren’t these the kinds of things that should have been dealt with at the beginning?

Speaking of ‘oh yeah,’ the ‘Tulsa World’ has editorialized against the project.

And in further news, this fall, U.S. Rep. and Cherokee Nation citizen Markwayne Mullin, R-Okla., introduced the Native American Tourism and Improving Visitor Experience Act, combining Native American tourism with federal tourism plans.

The Congressman said, “Native American culture is known and celebrated among Oklahomans, and it is important that we share our heritage with people from all over the world.”

Hey, would you be interested in a museum in OKC?

According to the Annual Impact Report for 2015 from the Oklahoma Tribal Government Gaming Commission, the output from all of the state’s tribal gaming was \$4.2 billion in 2014, representing 2.5 percent of private production in the Oklahoma economy. That’s quite an economic boost.

Tribal gaming operations and related facilities supported 23,277 ongoing jobs in 2014 of which 83.2 percent were full-time positions. Annual wages, salaries and tips of almost \$910 million were paid to those folks. There were annual employee benefits of almost \$255 million including health care, dental and life insurance, as well as retirement plans.

In 2014, Oklahoma Tribal Gaming Operations and their employees paid out more than \$264 million in payroll related taxes including almost \$30 million in income taxes to the State of Oklahoma. Oklahoma tribes have paid the state a total of \$980 million in exclusivity fees since 2006.

Some sad news in December 2015, an old friend passed away. John Trudell, Santee Sioux writer, poet, musician and activist passed on.

There are many articles and presentations honoring Trudell and his work and I’m glad to see many Native folks, leaders and national personalities remembering him from the 1969 occupation of Alcatraz to his part in the American Indian Movement in the ‘70s, plus his poetry, movie career and musical releases.

I got to know him during the dynamic days of early Indian activism in college and watched his activities on behalf of Native American peoples. I last saw him months ago during an event at the Jazz Hall of Fame in Tulsa. We agreed to catch up for an interview for ‘Myskoke Radio,’ but, understandably, his schedule and mine never seemed to work out. A pity. Rest In Peace, John Trudell.

It’s a new slate for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. A new Principal Chief, James Floyd, is busy taking over the reins of government.

Citizens are wondering what will happen in terms of his plans and the choices for who is going to be around to run the government. Floyd’s statements have been cautious about such subjects. The word ‘evaluate’ has been heard. There are major tribal economic developments in the works. Citizens are curious about what will happen to them. Quite a challenge awaits you Chief Floyd. Best wishes for your administration.

Enough for now, Hvtvm Cehecares — I’ll see you again.

PROTEST

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

court had jurisdiction to hear the case, but Dollar General appealed to the Supreme Court.

Ablavsky stated that this case is important.

‘At the core, the case is about a central issue concerning Native nations in the United States and the recognition of their sovereignty under federal law,’ Ablavsky said. ‘Questions of jurisdiction often seem abstract and technical, but for Native nations and their citizens these are often life and death situations.’

Ablavsky went on to explain that in 1978, the Oliphant v. Suquamish Indian case ruling stripped Native Nations of the ability to try non-Natives in criminal trials, the result of which led to widespread sexual violence toward Natives perpetrated by non-Natives.

‘Removing criminal jurisdiction in Oliphant contributed to a disastrous epidemic of sexual violence,’ Ablavsky said.

An attempt to reverse this occurred in the 2013

reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, which had provisions to address the issue.

A summary of the provisions can be viewed at: www.tribal-institute.org/lists/title_ix.htm.

MCN National Council Rep. Dode Barnett spoke at the rally about tribal jurisdiction.

“This is absolutely so vital to our jurisdiction, to protecting our people,” Barnett said. “It has always been crazy to me how someone can think that they can come where we exist, hurt our people and get away scot free and think we don’t have the right to do anything about that.”

Ablavsky stated in the Stanford article that the Oliphant ruling did not extend to civil cases. He also referenced the ruling of United States v. Montana to say there were two instances when civil jurisdiction applies.

‘When the non-Natives had entered into a consensual relationship with the tribes or its members and when non-Native conduct implicated the tribe’s political integrity, economic security or health and welfare,’ Ablavsky said.

Partridge said the National

Congress of American Indians and others have filed briefs to support the Mississippi Choctaw as well as the victim and their family.

As part of that effort, Muscogee (Creek) citizen and attorney Sarah Deer along with Cherokee Nation citizen and fellow attorney Mary Kathryn Nagle filed an amici curiae brief (someone who is not a party to the litigation, but who believes that the court’s decision may affect its interest) on behalf of the National Indigenous Women’s Resource Center and other advocacy groups.

This brief was posted on the SCOTUS blog.

During the rally, MCN Policy Analyst and Self-Governance Officer Brenda Golden said this case has an impact on all Native people.

“In this case, they are stripping tribes of the ability to administer justice and that strips all of us of our rights, you know, our basic human rights,” Golden said. “Once that authority is taken away, it will diminish our ability to govern ourselves, to rule ourselves and to get justice for our people.”



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Lighthouse Explorer of the Month: Kyra Epperson

Epperson inspired by program, stepfather

Chelsie Rich/Project Specialist

OKMULGEE, Okla. — The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Lighthouse Explorers Program announced Kyra Epperson as the September 2015 Explorer of the Month.

Epperson is a 17-year-old Muscogee (Creek) citizen from Okemah and a senior at Okemah High School.

Through the program, the explorers learn to develop leadership skills and build character.

“I wanted to make a difference in our community... I just wanted to make a difference and help people,” Epperson said.

Epperson was first introduced to the program by her stepfather, Jason Bleeker when she was in the eighth grade.

“You don’t have to be scared to show what you want to do,” she said. “After I got here and I met everybody, it just feels like family.”

Epperson has been involved in the program for four years.

“It’s a great experience to learn about your culture, about how law enforcement works... It’s just a great way to meet people,” she said.

She recalled one of her most memorable moments while in the program, which was a trip to Mississippi.



Chelsie Rich/MNN

The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Lighthouse Explorers Program announced Kyra Epperson as the September 2015 Explorer of the Month.

“It was fun; we had a blast... We met their chief. Went to a carnival; met a bunch of people and on the way back, stopped at

you’re doing wrong but if your doing good, he’ll tell you that too,” Epperson said. “When I was sick, he was there. When I was feeling sad, he would always try to cheer me up.”

Epperson initially thought about going into law enforcement after high school

but a knee injury made her rethink her decision and she now wants to go into physical therapy.

Epperson would like to attend Bacone College in Muskogee and major in exercise science.

Epperson is involved in softball and basketball and is the daughter of Bleeker and Cassia Epperson of Okemah.

“I wanted to make a difference in our community... I just wanted to make a difference and help people.”

— September 2015 Lighthouse Explorer of the Month
Kyra Epperson

a reservation,” Epperson said. She hopes to inspire others to join.

“They’ll help you with anything, even if you don’t want to learn about law enforcement. They’ll help you with whatever you want to get into,” Epperson said.

She spoke of her stepfather as an inspiration.

“He’s not afraid to tell you what

Lighthouse Explorer of the Month: William Bear

Bear uses leadership skills in different life aspects

Chelsie Rich/Project Specialist

OKMULGEE, Okla. — The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Lighthouse Explorers Program announced William Bear as the October 2015 Explorer of the Month. Bear is a 17-year-old from Okmulgee and a junior at Okmulgee High School.

Bear has been involved in the program for four years.

“I joined it because I wanted to learn more about police force and how many different subjects there are and what kind of stuff they do,” Bear said.

Bear shared what he has learned through the program.

“I learned a lot. I learned to trust people. I learned to stand out in front of groups of people,” Bear said. “You have to be more interactive with people and helpful.”

Bear has received his two-year tenure pin and was named to the color guard.

“I present the flags at basketball games and ceremonies,” Bear said.

One of the Bear’s best memories was when he presented the flags during the Bicentennial Commemoration Program for the Battle of Horseshoe Bend March 27, 2014 at Horse Bend National Military Park in Daviston, Ala.

“I presented colors down there... It felt great!” Bear said.

Through the years that Bear



Chelsie Rich/MNN

The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Lighthouse Explorers Program announced William Bear as the October 2015 Explorer of the Month.

has been involved, he has noticed a change in himself.

“I’ve seen myself change by being more mature and to be more respectful and to be patient,” Bear said.

Bear looks to his program advisor and MCN Lighthouse

ceremonial ground.

“I like to go to stompdances and lead dances,” Bear said. “It’s kind of nervous but I’ve been doing it for a while so I’m use to it. I’m still learning some songs.”

Bear plans to attend Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, Kan., after high school but is still uncertain about what he wants to study.

“I try to do really good in school, just to try to be at a certain grade so I can go to college,” Bear said.

Bear is of Muscogee (Creek) and Seminole decent, a member of the Bird Clan, Muddy Waters as well as New Tulsa Ceremonial Grounds and the son of Patrick and Lisa Bear of Okmulgee.

“I’ve seen myself change by being more mature and to be more respectful and to be patient.”

— October 2015 Lighthouse Explorer of the Month
William Bear

Tribal Police Meth Initiative Officer/Investigator Daniel Wind for guidance.

“He’s there for us. He’s a good listener. He’s been there for me in points in my life when I’ve needed somebody and I trust him,” Bear said.

Outside of the program, Bear takes his leadership skills to his



Photo submission

The Quileute Nation and other signatory tribes of its treaty who were involved in the United States v. Washington fishing rights case had a celebration July 19, 2015 for their victory in the litigation, which featured Muscogee (Creek) citizen Lauren King acting as lead counsel for the tribe.

L to r: King, Quileute council member, Vince Penn and Quileute Tribal Chairwoman Naomi Jacobson.

Citizen helps tribe win landmark case

King named lead counsel on fishing rights case

Darren DeLaune/MNN Reporter

OKMULGEE, Okla. — Muscogee (Creek) citizen Lauren King has always wanted to be someone that helps others, especially American Indian citizens and their tribes.

Growing up, she was taught her culture by her father, Jeff King and grandmother, Mvskoke veteran Anna King. She said both were a big influence on how she wanted her life to be.

“She taught me as a tribal member and as someone who knew the history of not only our culture but of other Native American tribes,” Lauren said. “It was my responsibility to give back and serve Native Americans if not, my tribe.”

She said her father, like her grandmother, made sure to raise her and her brothers to know their culture as well as that of other tribes.

Lauren said hearing stories from Anna that were handed down by their family about the Trail of Tears gave her a deeper understanding about the generational trauma it caused.

“It would make her cry to talk

“It was a 22-day trial,” Lauren said, “We set the record for the longest time a witness has been on a stand in the Western District of Washington.”

The U.S. District Court of the Western District of Washington ruled July 9, 2015 in favor of the Quileute Nation after a lengthy 23-day bench trial that ended in April 2015. The court heard testimony from 11 witnesses and admitted 472 exhibits comprised of thousands of pages.

The article stated that during the trial, the Makah Tribe argued for the Quileute to have a fishing limit at five to 10 miles offshore while the State of Washington argued that they should have a four-mile limit.

After considering all of the testimony and evidence, the court ruled that the Quileute would have the right to fish in the ocean out to 40 miles offshore and as far north as Cape Alava.

Lauren spoke about the ruling and how she felt about it.

“It might be the highlight of my entire career,” Lauren said. “It was the most pressure I have ever felt and the best I have ever felt with the win. It has meant everything to my career.”

She spoke about the differences between the Mvskoke and

“It was the most pressure I have ever felt and the best I have ever felt with the win. It has meant everything to my career.”

— Muscogee (Creek) citizen Lauren King

about that,” Lauren said. “It gave me a deep appreciation of all traditions we can learn from our elders.”

Lauren is a lawyer who works for Foster Pepper PLLC out of Washington State.

Lauren represented the Quileute Nation, from La Push, Wash., in their case to retain fishing rights.

According to an article from www.foster.com, in 2009, the Makah Indian Tribe sued the Quileute Tribe and the Quinault Indian Nation in United States v. Washington, seeking to dramatically cut back where in the ocean the Quileute and Quinault could fish.

“After a couple of years working with them,” Lauren said. “We were working so well together that they hired me as lead counsel on this case.”

The article said that at stake, were the western boundaries for the Quileute and Quinault in the Pacific Ocean, as well as the northern boundary of the Quileute’s treaty fishing grounds.

Treaty fishing boundaries are determined based upon where a tribe customarily fished and before treaty times, which were the 1850s for the Quileute. Evidence drawn from linguistics, archaeology, marine biology and anthropology was presented at trial to prove where the Quileute fished.

Quileute cultures.

“They are very different cultures but at the base level of having a reverence for elders and maintaining the cultural practices, they are the same,” Lauren said. “When it comes to songs, language, they are of their own.”

Lauren said the language of the Quileute is what they call a language isolate, which means it does not resemble or sound similar to any other languages.

“Their language played a role in the case,” Lauren said. “I had to learn a little bit of the words and work with their expert linguist.”

Lauren wants to continue to help the Quileute Tribe and other Nations as well.

She also talked about how she wanted to honor her grandmother by winning the case for her.

“I want to honor her memory,” Lauren said. “For everything she has taught me.”

Lauren is now up for partner at her firm. The Quileute Tribe has other issues going on that she will be helping with and preparing for.

“I want to make partner,” Lauren said. “I want to continue working with tribes and work with Creek Nation and I am exploring ways to do that.”

Lauren is of the Sweet Potato Clan and New Tulsa Ceremonial Ground.

Muscogee (Creek) citizen takes step into modeling industry



Photo submission
Muscogee (Creek) citizen Shannon Baker walks the runway in September 2015 during the Clary Sage College Fashion Show in Tulsa, Okla.

Baker wants endeavor to become profession

Darren DeLaune/MNN Reporter

OKMULGEE, Okla. — Imagine, for just a minute. You are in line with numerous other people, waiting, patiently. Not as a customer but rather for a fashion show runway. Hundreds of people are looking at you with numerous cameras flashing. What do you think would be going through your head? Would you stumble and fall? Would you mess up the walk and pose?

Some think it is an easy thing to do but for those who model, there is a lot more to it than walking.

Muscogee (Creek) Nation Department of Health Account Support Specialist Shannon Baker is in the early stages of this experience.

Baker, 22, thought about being a model when she would get compliments from other

citement of being in her first show.

“I was nervous but it was fun,” Baker said. “I enjoyed sitting there and getting the makeup put on me and that is way before the show. After that, we are all waiting and waiting and practicing our walk.”

Baker spoke about ‘the walk,’ as she called it.

“There is a certain way you have to walk and pose,” Baker said. “The fashion designers from the different shows do want you to walk a certain way.”

Baker says she is self-taught when it comes to learning how to walk. She watches a lot of YouTube videos, which has helped her. There are classes but Baker said that they are very expensive.

“I have a cousin who works for a modeling company and I watch her as well,” Baker said. “I will see how they do it and work on that.”

Baker has been in seven shows and three different photo shoots this year. If she had

“I want to continue this because I do love being a model and it is fun.”

— Muscogee (Creek) citizen
Shannon Baker

people saying that she could do so.

“They told me I was tall and skinny enough to be a model,” Baker said. “I have always thought about it.”

She began going to John Casablancas Center in Tulsa. JCC helps develop new talent to help them pursue careers in modeling and acting.

“I was taking classes there but then I stopped because I was still in high school,” Baker said.

Baker said her father has always wanted her to pursue a career in modeling. He helped her by paying for her classes when she was at JCC. After he passed, Baker felt she should continue with this journey for both of them.

“I want to continue this because I do love being a model and it is fun,” Baker said. “My goal is to be a professional model.”

Baker remembers her first show in Denver.

She spoke about the nerves she dealt with but also the ex-

her choice, she prefers being a runway model over photo shoots.

“I prefer those because I do not like to pose,” Baker said. “If I can’t do runway, I would love to do fitness modeling.”

She is currently considered a free-lance model.

“I am only free-lance because I have not signed with an agency,” Baker said. “That is when you are considered a professional is when you are signed.”

Baker has approached MCN Tourism and Recreation, Recreation Manager Rojer Johnson about having a modeling show during the annual Muscogee (Creek) Nation Festival.

“That would be great to do,” Baker said. “To show something here for our tribe, it would only be Native Americans at this show.”

Shannon Baker is of the Eco (Deer) Clan. Her mother is Lorna Baker and her father is the late Paul Lombard. She also has a son, Kasean, who is two-years-old.



That's not the setup to a joke, but it's the setup to a pretty funny story about Earl E. Bird. Who the heck is Earl E. Bird? [Find out at RiverSpiritTulsa.com.](#)

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AFVCKE – Happy	ELVWE – Hungry
CVPAKKE – Mad	EWVNHKE – Thirsty
FEKNOKKE – Sad	HOTOSE – Tired
HIYE – Hot	NUCKELE – Sleepy
ETKOLE – Cold	VLSE – Shy
ENOKKE – Sick	VNOKECKV – Love

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CLAREMORE, Okla. — Lou Jean Fixico was born April 17, 1951 in Claremore to Woodrow Fixico and Jeanie (Jimboy) Fixico. She passed away Dec. 9, 2015 in Tulsa at the age of 64.

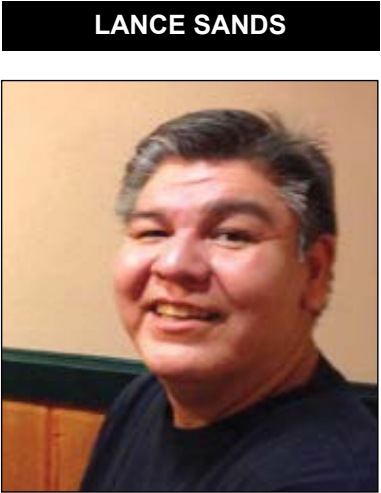
Lou worked many years as an Elderly Nutrition director for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation for many years. She was a devoted member and secretary of the Creek Chapel Church in Okemah.

Lou enjoyed singing traditional Creek hymns and was very helpful with any funerals or events at the Creek Chapel Church. She also enjoyed fishing, sewing and cooking. Lou loved her family and friends dearly and tried to never miss a grandchild's ballgame. She will be missed by all who knew her.

She is preceded in death by her: parents; brothers, Allen and George and sister, Rena Grant.

Survivors include her: son, Darrell Tilley of Iowa; daughters, Georgina Tilley of Okemah and Karen Tilley of Weleetka; brothers, Jake Fixico of Shawnee and Gilbert Fixico and wife Anita of Clearview; sister, Helen Fixico of Clearview; half-sister, Betty Shaw and husband, James of Henryetta and grandchildren, Tyson, Boogie and Jayden Micco.

Services were under the direction of Parks Brothers Funeral Home in Okemah and officiated by Rev. Grover Wind. Funeral services for Lou Jean Fixico were held Dec. 14, 2015 at the Creek Chapel Church in Okemah. Interment followed at the Creek Chapel Cemetery.



TEMPE, Ariz. — Lance Mayall Sands passed away in his sleep Nov. 19, 2015 at his residence in Tempe. A full-blooded Native American, he was a member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and the Bear Clan. Lance's kindness, generosity, humor and insight inspired countless people. He was born March 4, 1969 at Claremore Indian Hospital, to Danny and Richinda Sands. Lance's maternal grandparents were the late Rev. Wilburn and Mary Hill and his paternal grandparents were the late Alvin Daniel 'Buddy' Sands and Margaret Sands.

Lance spent much of his childhood and adolescence in Tucson, Las Cruces, N.M., and Tempe with his maternal aunt, Jean Chaudhuri (the older sister of Richinda Sands), his uncle Joyotpaul Chaudhuri and their two sons Joydev (Paul) and Jonodev. Lance also spent a significant amount of time in Okmulgee,

Okla., with his paternal uncle, the late Clifton Hill (the older brother of Richinda Sands), his wife, the late Betty Hill and their three sons. While a student at Okmulgee High School, his imposing physique and athleticism enabled him to excel in both wrestling and football.

As both a child and an adult, Lance traveled often from Florida to Alaska, encountering and inspiring a wide variety of individuals. Lance also had extended family connections that spanned the globe, including India, the country of origin for his uncle Joyotpaul. Lance's extended family also included friends he had made over the years.

Lance's mother Richinda and his aunt Jean lived a life of community volunteerism and leadership and Lance continued this long-standing tradition. In the late '80s, Lance was a volunteer tutor at the Phoenix Indian School. In more recent times, Lance supported Tonatierra: an international human rights organization.

Many of his maternal relatives have been active in church life. Lance's paternal grandparents were practicing Methodists and his maternal grandparents were practicing Baptists. Lance continued this commitment to Christian life and service by studying earning a degree from Cook Theological School in affiliation with Dubuque University. Lance worshiped with the Native American United Methodist Fellowship in Phoenix, where he served as a youth minister and Elder Bible Study teacher.

Lance was an independent thinker who possessed an encyclopedic knowledge of movies and literature, and he was a talented writer and public speaker. Lance also had a compassionate and reflective nature that he expressed through poems, essays and short stories, some of which were published. He was a contributing author to 'WhisperN-Thunder' magazine. Lance was also a brilliant and improvisational humorist. Friends and family will remember how he made them laugh and feel better about themselves.

In recent years and despite serious health challenges, Lance counseled and comforted others through his work as a Certified Peer Support and a Vocational Recovery coach in Arizona's behavioral health system and through his work with the United Methodist Church.

Although called from this world too soon, Lance's presence continues to have a profound effect on those who knew him.

Lance is survived by his: mother, Richinda Sands; uncle, Joyotpaul Chaudhuri; aunt, Elizabeth Chastain; cousin-brothers, Joydev (Paul) and Jonodev Chaudhuri; niece, Lila; nephews, Sam, Ross, Kanuux and Hamati; godchildren, Joey, Trevor and Robyn as well as many friends and cousins.

MVTO

I wanted to say "thank you" to the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and especially to the staff at the Higher Education Administration for assisting me in the completion of my Master's degree. My plan is to begin my Doctorate in Human Resources and Workforce Development at the University of Arkansas in August 2016. I look forward to retiring to Stidham one day and working with the Creek Nation in some capacity.

— Lori Scott Dreiling

Ross Group soliciting input for Eufaula Clinic project

Ross Group/Media Release

EUFAULA, Okla. — Ross Group is soliciting input from contractors and suppliers willing to provide industry specific knowledge to aid in the establishment of accurate cost estimates and development of the project construction documents for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Indian Health Center in Eufaula.

This project consists of the ground up construction of a new clinic, wellness center, facilities, and storage buildings totaling an estimated 78,900 square feet. This project is planned to achieve LEED Silver certification.

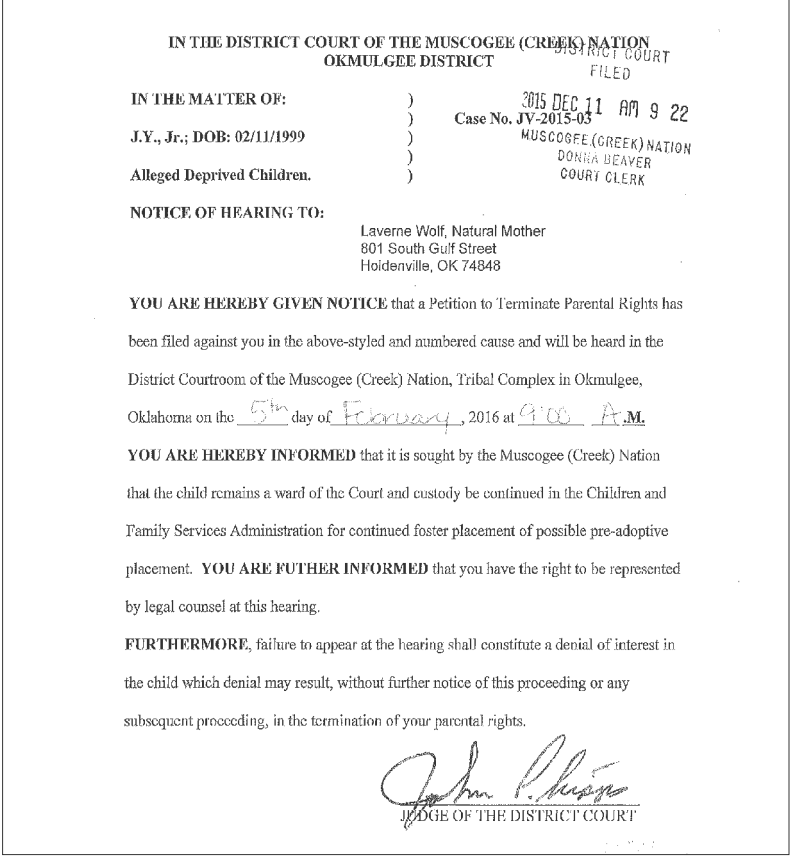
Schematic design documents and specifications are available upon request.

THIS IS NOT AN INVITATION TO BID.

Involvement in this process does not guarantee or imply a contractor or supplier will be awarded any portions of the work required to complete this project.

All contractors and suppliers will be required to participate in future public invitation to bid and provide the best qualified and acceptable proposal as compared to other competitive bids, in order to be awarded any or all portions of the work.

To discuss additional project requirements contact Travis Magers at: 405-264-2214.



MNN SUBMISSION DEADLINES

Jan. 15 — Jan. 7

Feb. 1 — Jan. 22

Feb. 15 — Feb. 5

March 1 — Feb. 22

March 15 — March 7

April 1 — March 24

April 15 — April 7

May 1 — April 22

May 15 — May 6

FREE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

fund a department to be the watchdog sends a clear, concise message that transparent government is a top priority. My hope is that many others will do the same."

The amendment established an independent three-member editorial board, which oversees Mvskoke Media, without influence from the tribal government.

The executive branch, legislative branch and Mvskoke Media are each responsible for nominating one member to the newly established three-person editorial board.

Each member will serve a three-year term.

Travis Snell and Rebecca Landsberry were confirmed as board members by tribal resolution Oct. 31, 2015 during the MCN National Council quarterly session. As of press time, a third member has not yet been nominated.

Snell is a citizen of the Cherokee Nation and serves as the associate editor of the 'Cherokee Phoenix,' the oldest Native American newspaper. The 'Phoenix' is one of a handful of tribal media outlets with free press protections currently in place.

He is a longtime member of the Native American Journalists Association (NAJA).

NAJA is a nonprofit organization educating and connecting its membership through programs that promote diversity and defend challenges to free press, speech and expression. NAJA currently has more than 500 members across the U.S., and Canada covering Native communities through local, tribal and mainstream media.

For more information visit: www.naja.com.

Landsberry is a Muscogee (Creek) citizen and former editor of the 'MNN.'

She is the current NAJA interim executive director and treasurer for the Native Health News Alliance.

Landsberry says freedom of the press empowers tribes.

"It is essential for these journalists covering stories in Native America to have autonomy and the means to hold those in power accountable to the citizens," she said. "This historic act will continue to strengthen tribal sovereignty and is a tremendous accomplishment for NAJA members there in Mvskoke Media, the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and Indian Country."

Cosper said the next step will be to add a freedom of information act (FOIA).

"We encourage citizens and officials alike to strengthen our role in the checks and balances system by supporting the passage of a FOIA, which will provide attributive documentation for the content of our coverage," Cosper said.

Cosper said the department aims to ask for citizen input with adding free press language directly into the MCN Constitution, in addition to the new code of law.

"Through this, citizens would vote to add us as a functioning body of the foundational document for MCN government with their approval being the only means to reverse it," Cosper said.

MCN is the fourth largest Native American tribe in the U.S., and includes more than 79,000 citizens across the globe.

It is the third tribe in the state of Oklahoma to enact free press protections, following the Osage Nation's passage of the Independent Press Act in 2008 and the Cherokee Nation's Independent Press Amendment in 2009.

JOM offers AP testing financial assistance

MCN JOM/Media Release

OKMUGLEE, Okla. — The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Department of Education and Training is offering financial assistance to Muscogee (Creek) students to take advance placement exams.

The program will pay for up to five exams per year. Applicants must reapply annually.

All checks must be made out to the applicant's site or reimbursed to the place in which they will take the exam.

Students who do not attend the required testing date will be responsible for the unused testing fee.

Those who fail to attend will be ineligible to receive further incentives until the Johnson O'Malley office receives payment.

The deadline to apply is Jan. 29.

Applications can be mailed to: MCN Department of Education and Training; Attn Johnson O'Malley, PO Box 580, Okmulgee, OK 74447.

For more information including eligibility requirements, call JOM at: 918-732-7840 or email: abattenfield@mcn-nsn.gov.